



Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

Colrain, MA

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower States, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. Since 1995, EPA has funded more than 200 Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilots, at up to \$200,000 each, to support creative two-year explorations and demonstrations of brownfields solutions. The Pilots are intended to provide EPA, States, Tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the Town of Colrain for a Brownfields Pilot. Colrain (population 1,757) is a rural town located in the hills of western Massachusetts. In August 1996, the Town lost its largest employer and taxpayer, American Fiber & Finishing (AF&F). The cotton bleaching mill had been in continuous operation for 150 years. The loss of this major employer has devastated Colrain's economy. As a result of the complex's closing, 160 people lost their jobs. The Town's unemployment rate is 8.7%, fifth-highest in the state, and nearly 11% of the community's residents live in poverty.

Colrain wants to facilitate the redevelopment of the AF&F site to create jobs, stabilize the local tax base, and establish a process for redeveloping other brownfields in the Town. Two potential purchasers have expressed interest in the AF&F property, but the unknown extent of contamination has deterred them from redeveloping the site. There are two other abandoned mill sites in the Town and other sites where contamination is suspected. The Town has established the community-based AF&F/Brownfields Task Force to guide redevelopment of brownfields, starting with the AF&F site. The Town is also working to retain existing businesses, and has successfully implemented a plan to retain its second-largest employer.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Colrain, Massachusetts

Date of Announcement:
July 1998

Amount Requested:
\$195,862

Profile: The Pilot will target a former cotton bleaching mill that was the Town's major employer until its closure in 1996.

Contacts:

Town of Colrain
(413) 624-5500

Regional Brownfields Team
U.S. EPA - Region 1
(617) 573-9681

Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/bmfld/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

OBJECTIVES

The Pilot will enable Colrain to determine the extent of contamination at the AF&F site, estimate cleanup costs, and create cleanup and redevelopment plans for the site. Pilot funds also will be used to facilitate citizen involvement in the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of the AF&F site.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Assessing the AF&F property and adjacent businesses and residences;
- Developing cleanup, financing, and redevelopment plans for the target site; and
- Facilitating citizen involvement in redevelopment decision making.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.